

Fordhall farm And Its Products

It has been said that 75% of the food we eat keeps our bodies; the other 25% keeps the doctor.

In these days of high pressure advertising and pretty packs with eye catching colours, how refreshing it is to find a farmer still carrying on with a cheese-making farm in almost the same way as his mother and indeed two generations have done on the same farm. Taking advantage too of modern discoveries such as stainless steel, plastics detergents and modern machinery, Mr Hollins has built and equipped a dairy as modern and hygienic as any in this country and has the very latest in milking parlours.



The Fordhall Jersey herd, (and there are up to one hundred head of milkers in the summer) are maintained entirely off the farm except for a little hay at milking time. They are fed on pastures which do not have any artificial fertilisers or harmful sprays whatever. The cows graze outside all winter on crops of hardy greens, kale and silage. Our high health record speaks for itself.

Here is a picture of the dairy. Through this window you can get a glimpse of the herringbone milking parlour. Over at the far end of the dairy are the stainless steel pipes which carry the milk from the parlour to the dairy and to the collecting tank. Here the milk is separated; the cream goes over to the table especially designed for clotting, and the skim milk goes into this large tank and is heated by steam to a temperature of 150°. Then it is pumped into the cheese and yoghurt vats. These are made of stainless steel and are insulated with a hot water jacket which keeps the milk at the correct temperature for cheese or yoghurt making. The cultures are injected at about 120° and after about three or four hours the result is the 'Little Miss Muffet' food we know as Curds and Whey.



Now I simply must mention that years ago Fordhall reared excellent prize-winning pigs with glorious skins on a diet consisting entirely of whey and bran. It is interesting to note that a little of the whey is left in the curds when making

soft cheese. The difference between hard and soft cheese is that in making hard cheese chemicals may be used to speed the draining of the whey. This removes all the trace elements and most of the vitamins, whereas a natural soft cheese should contain a little of the whey, and Fordhall cheeses of course do so.

Coming back to the cheeses, the curds are carefully placed in these large baskets and are left to drain for five to six hours; the time varies according to the acidity of the cheese. At this stage the cream is added and also the flavours. For those only true ingredients are used; in the corner are the mincers through which the vegetables etc are passed and then a huge blender mixes them together with the cream and cheese.



Incidentally, the plain curds are also sold as Cottage Cheese and this is a high protein food, entirely free from fat. The soft cheese is still very low in fat content compared with cream cheeses, but very much higher in protein.

The young lady sitting down is packing the cheese into pots or 2lb packs. These are taken into the deep freeze where they are sent out next day to the shops.

When meat, fish or vegetables are deep frozen it is most important that they are used when they are thawed out and not deep frozen again. With Fordhall cheeses however, because the cultures used are quite pure and only pure ingredients are used for flavouring, it is quite in order to re-freeze or store in an ordinary refrigerator. The cheeses will keep in your cool pantry for 3 - 4 days or a week in a refrigerator. They will keep longer if they are packed in an ice box. It is important that they be kept well covered.

I have here some leaflets giving ideas for using the cheeses. Many may not know that they can be cooked. A little of the minerals and vitamins may be lost in the cooking but they are still a high protein food and many protein foods are cooked.

For a wholesome tea or supper meal try the cheese hot or cold on wholemeal toast, or you may place them under the grill on toast. Any leftover cheeses may be mixed with mashed potatoes or left over vegetables. Drop in spoonfuls on hot griddle. You can add an egg to this recipe if you wish.

Cheese dips

For parties or Sunday teas; cut slices of cooked ham or beef in strips about 1" wide, spread liberally with Horseradish or Chive Cheese, roll up and secure with a small cocktail stick.

If you have to pack lunches you will find that the natural whey in the cheeses keeps the sandwiches fresh all day and you can be sure you have packed a nourishing meal. I find the addition of a little chopped tomato or cress making it tastier.

Hot baked potatoes in their jackets are increased in food value if you cut and half while hot and dot with horseradish, pimento or chive cheeses.

Fordhall are especially proud of their Live Yoghourt. Only the true yeast culture is used and for flavouring, only real fruit added.

Yoghourt is a high protein food. Like the cheese the proteins increase when the milk is converted, but in the case of yoghurt the whey is not drained off so you have the extra vitamins and minerals. The whey is a very cleansing food and also makes a splendid hand cream. It was used extensively by country folk before the days of pre-packed hand creams.



Yoghourt is becoming increasingly popular in this country and its value cannot be too highly rated. It is important to make sure you buy a 'live' yoghurt, and there are not too many true ones on the market. Fordhall Yoghourt is made with the true yeast culture and this gives it the high Vitamin B content which you all know as a tonic; milk itself is a form of calcium and as I have said before the whey contains minerals and vitamins. Although the body only needs a little of these trace elements it is important to make sure you get them daily as they are not stored in the body and a lack of these vital elements causes many diseases. For people suffering from ulcers, yoghurt is most helpful and may be

taken in place of a meal. If you have been having a course of drugs, you may find that the natural bacteria lying in the intestines has been killed and yoghurt helps to replace this as the bacteria wards off other illnesses.



Organised trips to the farm are welcome.